



# U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., Chairman

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## *News Advisory*

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## **Sensenbrenner Statement on Status of PATRIOT Act Conference Agreement**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Judiciary Committee Chairman F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr. (R-Wis.) released the following statement regarding the status of the House-Senate PATRIOT Act conference agreement:

“Two days ago, House and Senate negotiators reached an agreement on a conference report that provides those entrusted with protecting the American people with the tools and resources necessary to do their jobs. The agreement was reached after an extensive and bipartisan legislative and oversight process. The House Judiciary Committee, which I chair, takes its oversight responsibilities seriously, particularly concerning the authorities granted in the PATRIOT Act; thus, this Committee has been very aggressive in its PATRIOT Act oversight, which has been made available to the public <http://judiciary.house.gov/Printshop.aspx?Section=44> .

“Most notably, this agreement permanently tears down ‘the wall’ that prior to 9/11 prohibited the sharing of information between the law enforcement and intelligence communities and hindered their ability to ‘connect the dots.’ I am concerned the recent snag in support for the agreement gets us a little closer to rebuilding ‘the wall.’ We must permanently eliminate ‘the wall’ – and this agreement does that.

“This agreement also ensures our tools to fight the next Mohammed Atta intent on killing thousands of Americans are at least as tough as those to fight drug dealers and organized crime.

“While there have been no abuses found of the PATRIOT Act authorities, this agreement provides enhanced congressional and judicial oversight to ensure that these terrorism-

fighting provisions are not misused in the future. The agreement is more protective of civil liberties concerns than current law in dozens of areas, including requiring additional reporting requirements on how many persons are the subject of national security letters (NSLs).

“The agreement includes a seven-year sunset on three provisions. This compromise agreement splits the difference between the ten-year House sunsets and the four-year Senate sunsets. A majority of the House negotiators have signed the agreement, but we still have work to do with the Senate conferees. As a result, we will not be able to file the conference agreement today and will be forced to consider the PATRIOT Act conference report less than one month before these vital tools expire.”

### **Some Conference Report Highlights:**

- Permanently tears down “the wall”
- Makes permanent 14 of the 16 expiring PATRIOT Act provisions
- Places a 7-year sunset on Sections 206 and 215 of PATRIOT Act and the “lone wolf” terrorist provision (compromise between House and Senate)
- Prohibits narco-terrorism (similar to House provision)
- Fights crime and terrorism at America’s seaports (from House bill)
- Combats terrorism financing (from House bill)
- Expands the law prohibiting material support to terrorists (from House bill)
- Enhances penalties for attacks against railroad and mass transit (similar to House provision)
- Limits loopholes in the definition of terrorism (similar to House bill)
- Makes certain air piracy crimes subject to the death penalty (similar to House bill)
- Clarifies section 215 to ensure that information likely to be obtained relate to *foreign* intelligence information *not* concerning a U.S. person, pertain to an ongoing international terrorism investigation, and be subject to a judicial review process that authorizes the judge to set aside or affirm a 215 order that has been challenged (compromise between House and Senate).
- Requires adoption of minimization procedures governing the retention and dissemination of tangible items obtained under section 215 (compromise between House and Senate).
- Establishes additional requirements for the use of National Security Letters, including congressional disclosure of the frequency of their use, and enhances congressional oversight of electronic and other types of surveillance (compromise between House and Senate).
- Contains comprehensive measure to address the national methamphetamine abuse epidemic (similar to House and Senate legislation).

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